

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(NUMBERED ACCORDING TO LEVEL OF DEPTH AND READINESS TO SHARE)

1. On a scale from 1 to 10 (1 being never and 10 being always), how would you rate your capacity to never give up when you are challenged? Why would you rate yourself this way?
2. While we might not face something as extreme as this “bow or burn” tale, where do we face pressure to bow to false idols in our culture?
3. What temptations do you struggle with? Where might you be tempted to give in to temptation, even though it won’t necessarily help you avoid trials?
4. What trials are you currently facing? How does Jesus want to use his word and his people to reassure you of his love for you?
5. How is Jesus the real hero of the story of Daniel 3? How does keeping him as the focus actually empower us to live courageous lives?
6. Would you choose today to trust Jesus as the and to follow the One who sacrificed His all for you, and offers you life by His grace and through his resurrection? Will you enable him to have all authority as the one who calls the shots in your life? Would you like to enter into a saving relationship with God through Jesus? Ask your lifegroup leader to lead you in prayer to receive Christ. You can pray this prayer:

Dear Lord Jesus, I know that I am a sinner, and I ask for Your forgiveness. I believe You died for my sins and rose from the dead. I turn from my sins and invite You to be the master of my life. I want to trust and follow You as my Lord and Saviour. I declare that I am Yours, and You are mine, In Jesus name, AMEN.



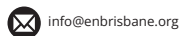
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PRAYER

Lord, we pray that we would treasure Jesus more and more, so that we would have the courage to say “no” to temptation, and the strength to face life’s trials. We pray that our courage and resolve would be a witness, even to people seemingly as far away from God as Nebuchadnezzar.

In Jesus name,

AMEN

Adapted from Aaron Gray: Fiery Furnace.

OPENING QUESTION

(OPTIONAL)

What do you prefer, hot weather or cold weather?

¹³ Then Nebuchadnezzar in furious rage commanded that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego be brought. So they brought these men before the king. ¹⁴ Nebuchadnezzar answered and said to them, "Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the golden image that I have set up?" ¹⁵ Now if you are ready when you hear the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music, to fall down and worship the image that I have made, well and good. But if you do not worship, you shall immediately be cast into a burning fiery furnace. And who is the god who will deliver you out of my hands?"

¹⁶ Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered and said to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. ¹⁷ If this be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of your hand, O king. ¹⁸ But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up."

¹⁹ Then Nebuchadnezzar was filled with fury, and the expression of his face was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. He ordered the furnace heated seven times more than it was usually heated. ²⁰ And he ordered some of the mighty men of his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace. ²¹ Then these men were bound in their cloaks, their tunics, their hats, and their other garments, and they were thrown into the burning fiery furnace. ²² Because the king's order was urgent and the furnace overheated, the flame of the fire killed those men who took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. ²³ And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell bound into the burning fiery furnace.

²⁴ Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished and rose up in haste. He declared to his counselors, "Did we not cast three men bound into the fire?" They answered and said to the king, "True, O king." ²⁵ He answered and said, "But I see four men unbound, walking in the midst of the fire, and they are not hurt; and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of the gods."

²⁶ Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the door of the burning fiery furnace; he declared, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out, and come here!" Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came out from the fire. ²⁷ And the satraps, the prefects, the governors, and the king's counselors gathered together and saw that the fire had not had any power over the bodies of those men. The hair of their heads was not singed, their cloaks were not harmed, and no smell of fire had come upon them. ²⁸ Nebuchadnezzar answered and said, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who has sent his angel and delivered his servants, who trusted in him, and set aside the king's command, and yielded up their bodies rather than serve and worship any god except their own God. ²⁹ Therefore I make a decree: Any people, nation, or language that speaks anything against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego shall be torn limb from limb, and their houses laid in ruins, for there is no other god who is able to rescue in this way." ³⁰ Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the province of Babylon.

[Daniel 3:13-30, English Standard Version](#)

There was a fourth, and he was so bright and glorious, that even the heathen eyes of Nebuchadnezzar could discern a supernatural lustre about him. "The fourth," he said, "is like the Son of God." What appearance Christ had put on I cannot tell, which was recognizable by that heathen monarch; but I suppose that he appeared in a degree of that glory in which he showed himself to his servant John in the Apocalypse, and such was the excessive splendour and brightness, the God-like air that was about him, the flash of his eye and the splendour of his gait as he walked the fire with the other three, that even Nebuchadnezzar could not help saying he was like the Son of God. Beloved, you must go into the furnace if you would have the nearest and dearest dealings with Christ Jesus. Whenever the Lord appears, it is to his people when they are in a militant posture. Moses saw God at Horeb, but it was in a burning bush; Joshua saw him, but it was with a drawn sword in his hand, to show that his people are still a militant people; and here where the saints saw their Saviour, it was as himself being in the furnace. The richest thought that a Christian perhaps can live upon is this, that Christ is in the furnace with him. When you suffer, Christ suffers. No member of the body can be pained without the head enduring its portion; and so you, a member of Christ's body, in every pain you feel, pain the head Christ Jesus. As Baxter says, "Christ takes us through no darker rooms than he went through before;" and one could improve upon it and say, "He takes us through no rooms so dark but what he is himself there in the darkness, and makes that darkness by his presence light, cheering and gladdening our hearts."

I know that to the worldling this seems a very poor comfort, but then if you have never drunk this wine you cannot judge its flavour. If the King has never taken you into his banqueting house, and his banner over you has never been love; if he has never kissed you with the kisses of his mouth; if he has never said unto you, "I am thine and thou art mine," why you cannot be expected to know what you have not experienced; but he who has once drunk of the well of Bethlehem, would hazard his life that he might get a draught of it again; would be willing to go through the furnace though it were heated seventy thousand times hotter, that he might be able once more to see that Son of God, the fourth bright One who trod the glowing coals. The presence of Christ is the brightest joy beneath the stars. Oh! Christian, seek it; do not be content without it, and thou shall have it.

CHARLES SPURGEON: *Consolation in the Furnace*